

**Joint AgNER Appropriations Committees
Follow-up to March 5 Presentation on Commerce
March 6, 2019**

1. What efforts are Commerce rural planners taking for recovery and resiliency after Hurricane Florence, particularly in Eastern NC?

According to Commerce, the Rural Economic Development Division's (REDD) approach to Florence recovery is:

- Continue to work closely with the Governor's Recovery Team and Emergency Management to advance existing recovery, expedite delivery of resources, and respond to challenges that arise after Hurricane Florence.
- Actively engage with other state, federal and external partners to align programs and identify and leverage resources in support of impacted communities
- Initiate outreach to impacted communities and hold listening sessions, as requested, that provide details about each REDD program, offer direct connections to our lead program staff, provide information about any new DR related funding programs, and allow our team to get input and feedback from community leaders.
- Directly engage Planning staff with impacted communities and offer planning and related services as requested.

Specific examples provided by Commerce can be found in the Follow-Up folder for the March 6th, 2019 meeting on the Joint AgNER Appropriations Committees website.

2. How many calls does the VisitNC call center receive every year?

In 2017, the VisitNC call center received 7,780 calls via the 1-800-VisitNC number and mailed 189,215 NC *Travel Guides* to potential visitors. This does not include calls received as part of the Hurricane Florence hotline.

3. Have electric car chargers been returned to the welcome centers?

There are currently no electric car chargers at welcome centers. According to the Department of Transportation (DOT), there have never been electric car chargers at welcome centers. From 2011-2013, DOT piloted four electric vehicle charging stations at rest areas in Johnston and Alamance counties.

4. What is the process for the planning and construction of a new welcome center?

The Department of Transportation (DOT) is responsible for constructing any new welcome centers. In 2006, DOT adopted a policy which required a written agreement from the Department of Commerce accepting fiscal responsibility for the operation of a new welcome center prior to planning and construction. Additionally, G.S. 143B-421.3 requires that the Departments of Commerce and Transportation consult with the chairs of the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee, the chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on the Department of Transportation, and the chairs of the House and Senate AgNER Appropriations Committees before beginning the design or construction of new welcome centers.